

Sherwood Middle School

"Kids first!"

Parent Handbook and Curriculum Guide

2004 – 2005

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General Information

(5 0 8) 8 4 1 - 8 6 7 0

School Hours: 7:55 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Office Hours: 7:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Fax ~ 508 841 8671

Daniel W. Costello, Principal ~ 508 841-8675

Riitta M. Bolton, Grade 5 Assistant Principal ~ 508 841-8672

Frederick A. Randall, Grade 6 Assistant Principal ~ 508 841-8680

Patty McCaffrey, School Nurse ~ 508 841-8678

Leslie Wortzman, Grade 5 Adjustment Counselor ~ 508 841-8673

Kelly O'Connell, Grade 6 Adjustment Counselor ~ 508 841-8688

Child Safe Answering Machine ~ 508 841-8690

The answering machine is activated each evening so that parents or guardians can call the school to let us know if a child will be absent from school. When the machine answers your call, please provide the following:

- 1. Your name**
- 2. Your child's name**
- 3. Your child's team and homeroom teacher**

School Cancellation or Delays

Please DO NOT call the school to check whether or not there is school. Call either the Worcester Telegram & Gazette Storm Line (508-792-9400, enter 4210), listen to radio stations (WBZ AM 1030, WTAG AM 580, WSRS FM 96 and WXLO FM 104.5) or watch any of the major Boston TV stations (Channels 4, 5 and 7).

If there is an early morning safety factor, the School Department may announce a one-hour delay of the opening of school. Only under very special circumstances will a two-hour delay be called. The announcement will be made on the television and radio stations listed above, usually no later than 6:00 a.m. If this plan were in effect, Sherwood Middle School starting time would **be 8:55 a.m.** When there is a one-hour delay, buses for all schools will begin their routes one hour later than the regularly scheduled time. Parents who bring children to school must also wait one hour to do so. Special Education transportation will also be delayed one hour unless the student is individually notified of another adjustment.

Visitor Policy

All visitors to the school must report to the main office to sign in and to pick up a visitor's badge. This includes volunteers and parents in for conferences.

Sherwood Middle School Staff

Principal – Daniel W. Costello
 Assistant Principals – Riitta M. Bolton and Frederick A. Randall
 Secretaries – Denise Bairos, Linda Stake, Helen Kvaracein and TBA
 Adjustment Counselors – Kelly O'Connell and Leslie Wortzman
 Curriculum Coordinators – Ann Jones (Social Studies), Barbara Swidler (Mathematics),
 Anne Wentzell (Literacy), Cindy Wilson (Science)
 Nurse – Patty McCaffrey, R. N.
 School Psychologists – Lorette McWilliams and TBA
 Custodial Staff – Joyce Ford and Robert Warren

| | Grade 5 | | | | Grade 6 | | |
|-------------|------------------|------------------|--------------|-------------|------------------|------------------|--------------|
| Team | ELA/SS | Math/Sci | Rooms | Team | ELA/SS | Math/Sci | Rooms |
| Red | Barbara Larson | Ann Greenawalt | 108, 109 | Orange | Lorry D'Ascanio | Diane Adams | 007, 139 |
| White | Karen Gutekanst | Varsha Desai | 103, 104 | Navy | Marybeth Skelley | Janet Duggan | 001, 006 |
| Green | Karen Binder | Helen Lipkin | 107, 106 | Yellow | Mike Ciccolella | Janalee Welch | 137, 138 |
| Yellow | Cindy Barhoff | Stephanie Aubin | 101, 102 | White | Donna McGrath | Mary Kwiatkowski | 236, 237 |
| Blue | Christine Taylor | Kristina Russo | 110, 111 | Silver | Erin Stelmach | Sandra Siegman | 203, 204 |
| Purple | Elizabeth Blash | Deborah Gouley | 105, 122 | Green | Karen Sheldrick | Virginia Aikens | 202, 233 |
| Gold | Patrice McCabe | Ginger Rekemeyer | 125, 126 | Purple | Joyce Avery | Judy DelSignore | 234, 235 |
| Teal | Karen Smith | Peter Nolle | 207, 208 | Gold | Jason Miller | Anne Egan | 119, 120 |
| Silver | Carolina Virzi | Diane Lavery | 209, 215 | Teal | Heather Gablaski | Auggie DeBaggis | 116, 117 |
| Orange | Maureen Murphy | Beth Van Atten | 216, 217 | Red | Kevin Donahue | Maura O'Neill | 136, 127 |
| Grey | David Ljungberg | Stephanie Roszko | 205, 206 | Blue | Diane Johnson | Bob Pahigian | 118, 121 |

Art

Kristine Cobb
 Brian Paquette

Computer Education

Gail Flanagan
 Susan Steiner

Developmental Reading

Pam Catino

English Language Learning

Madeline Figueras

Foreign Language

Andriana Anderson
 Patricia Downes
 Cheryl Lowney
 Marylou Luukko
 Susana Pierce
 Nathalie Scott
 Amanda Sykes

Health

Gail Goodness
 Laura Jonaitis
 Alison McDonald

Media Center

Cindy Erle, Media Specialist
 Janet Pope, Aide

Music/Drama

Kris Atherton
 Stephanie Collins-Rankin
 Christine Dunn
 Phil Koziara

Music/Drama, cont.

Kathy LeBoeuf
 Brian Liporto
 Jennifer Micarelli-Webb
 Anthony Ugialoro, Jr.

Physical Education

Lee DiGristina
 Cathy Burke
 Richard Moran

Special Education

SPECIAL EDUCATION COORDINATOR
 TBA

LEARNING CENTER TEACHERS

Karen Cappucci, Grade 5
 Deb Reidy, Grade 6

INCLUSION TEACHERS

Wendy Hawkins, Grade 5
 Sue Hirsh, Grade 6
 Kristina Mecelicaite, Grade 6

ABA TEACHER

Stephanie Sullivan, Grade 5/6

ABA/LIFE SKILLS TECHS

Caitlyn Dailey
 Karen Helmstader
 Gillian Hohne

SPEECH PATHOLOGIST

Sharon Wade

Special Education, cont.

AIDES – GRADE 6

Karmen Bogdesic, 6 Teal
 Kathy Von Behren, 6 Gold
 Deanne Voas, 6 Red/Yellow
 Carole Majewski, 6 Green
 Keith Welch, 6 Blue/White
 Darlene Golden, 6 Resource Room
 Cyndi Tozeski, 6 Resource Room

AIDES – CHILD SPECIFIC

Amy Miller, Grade 6
 Michele Domiano, Grade 6
 Teri Rocci-McGorty, Grade 6
 Joy Bosnakis, Grade 6
 Chris Wilkinson, Grade 6
 Dolly Long, Grade 6
 Ruth Hullinger, Grade 6

AIDES – GRADE 5

Judith Adair, 5 Yellow
 Toby Alvarez, 5 Silver
 Mary Ballou, Resource Room 5
 Vicki Perez, Resource Room 5
 Suzie Polechronis, Grey 5
 Sindu Puthanangady, Green 5
 Cathy Shaw, Resource Room 5

AIDES – CHILD SPECIFIC

Kathy Bishop, Grade 5
 Margi Bradley, Grade 5
 Ellen Brown, Grade 5
 Heather Fontana, Grade 5
 Elizabeth McRae, Grade 5

School Calendar

Principal's Welcome

August 1, 2004

Welcome to Sherwood Middle School! I am happy to offer you this Parent Handbook and Curriculum Guide for the 2004 – 2005 school year. I hope that you find this document to be useful and informative. Please keep it handy as you can refer to it all year.

This promises to be an exciting year for students, staff and families. It is the first year of operation of the new Sherwood Middle School. I am confident that we have put together an outstanding staff that will serve the needs of the almost 1000 students we expect to serve this year. We have a balance of new teachers and veteran teachers; curriculum coordinators who will work to align curriculum with state frameworks; a full complement of Allied Arts and Foreign Language offerings that will provide a well-rounded education; and a renovated lower level that will provide new art, English Language Learning, and Technology space. It has been a very busy summer here at Sherwood!

The Sherwood program is based on a team approach to learning. All students are assigned to a two-person team. One teacher teaches math and science and the other teaches English/Language Arts and social studies. The team approach has been proven a very effective means of instruction for fifth and sixth graders. The school will serve as an appropriate transition between the single classroom of elementary school and the four-person teams of Oak Middle School.

I promise to make parent communication a priority this year. We will work hard to make sure that you have all the information you need. The web page will be updated regularly. List-Serv messages will appear in your in-box (if you sign up for that). And a Monday folder will accompany your child with information from the school and the team. Please feel free to contact the school at any time with concerns or questions. We will do our best to reply in a timely manner. If you do not hear back from the person you are trying to reach within 24 hours, let me know.

There will be some issues that come up this year that are unanticipated. We have tried to plan for every contingency, but in opening a new school, things will come up unexpectedly. We will work to provide the best education we can, and hope that you will let us know if you encounter problems or concerns. We are focused on improvement and keeping kids first. It will be a great year.

I look forward to meeting you and serving Shrewsbury's fifth and sixth graders!

Sincerely,

Daniel W. Costello
Principal
Sherwood Middle School
"Kids first!"

The Mission of Shrewsbury Public Schools

The Shrewsbury Public Schools, in partnership with the community, will provide students with the skills and knowledge for the 21st century, an appreciation of our democratic tradition, and the desire to continue to learn throughout life.

Grouping Practices in Shrewsbury Public Schools

The Shrewsbury Public Schools recognize that the purpose of grouping is to create learning environments that best meet the needs of students. As a result, the school district supports flexible grouping practices at the elementary, middle, and high school levels.

In order to deal effectively with mixed ability groups and students with special needs, teachers must be classroom managers, using a variety of instructional practices. These may include pretest and post-test evaluations, small group lessons, learning stations, cooperative learning, peer tutoring, independent study, and the use of technology.

At the elementary level, students are grouped heterogeneously in self-contained classrooms, with opportunities for team structures in grade 4. Within elementary classrooms, teachers use a variety of strategies such as whole class, small group, and individualized instruction.

Middle school students are members of heterogeneous, interdisciplinary teams designed to include all achievement and ability levels. The teachers on the teams make decisions about the groups within their teams and utilize a variety of grouping strategies throughout the school year.

At the high school level, a wide variety of instructional programs are available. Within these programs are different levels of challenges and experiences. Students may choose from, or be recommended for, three levels of course work, from Advanced Placement courses to level 3 courses. Students are recommended for courses, depending upon their talents and interests, after consultation with teachers, parents and guidance counselors. The school makes placement decisions on the basis of standardized testing, past academic performance and teacher recommendations. Placement levels may vary in different subject areas and attempts at upward placement are always encouraged.

The Shrewsbury Public Schools recognize that students grow and change during their years in school and that school programs must respond accordingly. Students must not be categorized and tracked in such a way as to limit their potential growth. Consequently, each level in the system develops flexible grouping strategies based upon the ages and the needs of its students.

Parent Information

The Importance of a Strong Parent/School Partnership

Parents should feel comfortable contacting the school when questions or concerns arise. We ask that you follow a logical chain of communication by contacting the classroom teacher as an initial step in most situations. Parents should feel free to call counselors, specialists, and administrators as the need arises. Sherwood Middle School will make every effort to keep parents informed. Regular communications in the form of a monthly newsletter, team newsletters or websites, reports to the School Committee, which are broadcast on Channel 34, parent open houses, curriculum nights, and other special events are scheduled through the year. Please check book bags and backpacks every Monday for the weekly Communication Folder.

When Parents Have a Concern

The school is concerned about your child's educational program and welcomes the opportunity to assist you and your child to have a successful experience. Most problems can be solved completely by contacting the right person to discuss your concerns. Generally, the best place to begin to solve an issue is with the source, most often by contacting the classroom teacher. In the event that you are not satisfied with the solution or are unable to resolve an issue you should then contact the appropriate grade level assistant principal. Please note that building phone numbers are listed in this handbook. In the event your problem is not addressed sufficiently at this level you should then contact the principal.

Visiting the School

We are happy to have parents visit our school. Parents are welcome to visit after arranging a time with the classroom teacher. Visitors should schedule an appointment in advance and must check in at the receptionist's window located in the lobby, where a visitor's badge will be issued.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Either the parent or the school may initiate parent/teacher conferences. The school will contact the parent to schedule a conference if they determine a need to do so. When you see a need to meet, contact the classroom teacher or the counselor to schedule a conference. **Two parent conference days have been added to the school calendar – October 27th and March 16th.** These conferences will be scheduled as determined by team or individual teachers. Additional conferences are normally scheduled before the school day, after school or, when possible, during the school day. Prior to the meeting it is important to note key issues that you would like to address. These might include your child's performance and progress, personal development, discussion about a specific curriculum area, skill development, or test results. We will try to schedule a time that is mutually convenient for both the parents and the school.

Student Records

Parents have the right to review their child's school records. Parents should call the school to arrange a visit to the school to review the student's cumulative folder. The complete record will be made available to the parents. If students are transferring to another school district, official records will be forwarded by the school following the parent's authorization with a signed release of records form. Official copies cannot be made immediately and sufficient notice is requested to ensure a smooth transfer of student records. Official records are usually sent to a new school via U.S. Mail.

Extended Day

Extended School Care is a non-profit organization that provides quality before and after school care for children in kindergarten through eighth grade. The program is designed to meet the needs of children in Shrewsbury for a safe, supervised environment in which appropriate and stimulating activities are implemented by quality staff. These activities strive to meet the children's social, emotional and physical needs and include arts and crafts, dramatics, music, sports, cooking, games and quiet activities. The program is community based, utilizing many facets of community support including senior citizen volunteers. This, along with active parent involvement, will enrich the extended school hours for the children of Shrewsbury.

The program opens on the first day of school and is available for the school days. We do not provide care on snow days, professional days or during vacation weeks. However, care is available on release day afternoons.

After School Care Information

Children are dismissed to the program at the close of the school day. Childcare is provided until 6:00 p.m.

Unfortunately, the program has enrollment limits. A waiting list has been established and slots are awarded on a first come first serve basis. If you wish to get more information or to place your child's name on the waiting list, please contact the program director.

For information regarding the Extended School Care Program, please contact Danielle Murray, Program Director, at 841-8727. She can also be reached by fax at 841-8721 or by email at: dmurray@shrewsbury.k12.ma.us.

Student Arrival and Dismissal

Parents who drive their children to school may begin dropping them off at the designate area (see **Appendix B**) at 7:25 a.m. Parents are asked to exclusively use Sherwood Avenue for drop-offs, afternoon pick-ups and exits. Buses will use one of the Oak Street entrances for drop-offs and pick-ups and will exit via Hutchins Street. All students should enter the school directly upon arrival and go to a designated area inside the building. Students will report to homerooms at 7:40 a.m. Parent drop-offs must be completed by 7:55. Students are dismissed at 2:30 p.m.

Attendance

Good attendance is important for success in school. Much of what students learn comes from presentations by the teachers and interactions with other students in the classroom. To that end the administration requests that parents make every effort to have their child attend, on time, 7:55 a.m., each day school is in session. Children, however, do become ill and as a result need to stay

at home. Parents should use their discretion regarding the seriousness of an illness but as a general rule if the child will be uncomfortable with a cold or spread the illness to staff and students, it is best to keep the child at home.

Media Coverage

Many school events and student accomplishments are publicized through both print and electronic media, including local newspapers, local cable television, and the school's website. If you have an objection to having your child's name publicized or your child photographed or videotaped, please contact the principal or one of the assistant principals. Unless the school receives contrary notice from a parent, it is assumed that parents have given consent for their children's names and images to be publicized through the means listed above.

Volunteering

Volunteering in the Shrewsbury Public Schools is a time-honored tradition. We welcome your interest by contacting the PTO or the main office directly. Your support and expertise is welcome.

Parent Teacher Organization

The Parent Teacher organization supports Sherwood and Oak Middle Schools with educational, social and fund-raising activities. Getting involved is a good way to be of service to your school and ultimately, your child. The parent organization also works with the School Council and provides initiatives to improve the schools. If you are interested in participating, please contact the school to find out when meetings are scheduled.

School Council

Another opportunity to be actively involved in your child's middle school experience is to serve on the School Council. The Council, comprised of teachers, parents and community members, meets with the school administration one evening each month, in an advisory capacity to guide evaluation and initiation of school improvement as well as address current issues. Please contact the principal if you have an interest in serving on the Sherwood Middle School Council.

Special Services

Special Education

Shrewsbury Public Schools provide special education services in accordance with IDEA-97. Students may be referred for a special education evaluation following modifications to the regular classroom program and a pre-referral meeting at the building level. If a special need is determined the educational team will write an Individualized Education Plan, which defines the type and frequency of services.

Shrewsbury attempts to provide special education services in the regular classroom whenever possible. Specialists work with children in their own classrooms to help them achieve success. Specific questions about the special needs program should be directed to Steve Dupuis, Special Education Director, at 508 841 8677.

Title I

Support instruction in reading is provided through the Title I Program. This is a federally funded program based on economic needs of the school community and the learning issues of the students. Specific questions about the Title I program should be directed to the building principal.

ELL (English Language Learners)

Shrewsbury Public Schools provides English language instruction and support for students whose native language is not English. Instruction is provided outside the regular classroom in a small group setting or on an individual basis. ELL students study language appropriate materials to increase their English language reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. The ELL teacher collaborates with the classroom teacher and sends home reports every trimester. If your family speaks a language other than English and you believe your child needs English language support, please contact your child's classroom teacher or building principal. They will notify the ELL teacher so services can be scheduled.

Counseling Services

During the middle level years, students often need additional support working through adolescent issues such as peer/family relationships, academic performance or emotional concerns. Students may self-refer or be referred by a parent, a teacher, administration or the school nurse for counseling guidance services. The school has the services of School Psychologist, as well as Grade 5 and Grade 6 Adjustment Counselors.

School Nurse

Our emergency call system is our one vital link to you, the parent, in case of illness or serious injury. Please take care to keep us informed of any changes that might take place during the year. Changes in address, telephone numbers, job location, and marital status as it relates to child custody, is important to us when it means contacting someone quickly in an emergency. Please be sure to give the nurse the names of people we can reach when you are not available. The school nurse is available during school hours. She can be reached in her office at (508) 841 8678.

Our children all need to be home and cared for when they are sick. However, it is also appropriate that they learn now that they need to go to school even on days when they don't feel 100%. Children need to be taught that resting when they get home and going to bed early is a good way to deal with "off " days.

If your child has a strep throat, he or she may return to school after being on an antibiotic for 24 hours. Please let the nurse know if your child has strep, as there are children in some classes whose health situations require their going on preventative dosages of antibiotic if exposed to strep.

When a child is not feeling well or gets injured in any way he/she will be seen by the nurse. The nurse will make a judgment as to whether the parent should be called in to pick up the child. Because of the number of pupils involved and the need to have the nurse on duty in the school, the school nurse will be unable to provide transportation home for students who are injured or become ill. If it is the professional opinion of the nurse that a child should be sent home, the nurse or building secretary will call and ask a parent to arrange for transportation. In the case of

serious accident, the nurse will contact the parents and call for an ambulance. The charge for the ambulance is covered by most health insurance plans.

Dispensation of Medication

We would like to inform you of the policies that have been put in place to ensure the health and safety of children needing medicines during the school day. Our school district requires that the following forms must be on file in your child's health records before we give any medicine at school:

Signed consent by the parent or guardian to give the medicine, on a "Written Parent/Guardian Consent for Medication Administration" form. Signed medication order. The written "Medication Order" form should be taken to your child's licensed medical professional (your child's physician, nurse, practitioner, etc.) for completion and returned to the school nurse. Orders may be faxed to (508) 841-8671, "Attention School Nurse". This order must be renewed as needed and at the beginning of each academic year. Please contact the school nurse to obtain copies of both forms.

You or a responsible adult whom you designate should deliver medicines to the school in a pharmacy or manufacturer_labeled container. Please ask your pharmacy to provide separate bottles for school and home. No more than a thirty-day supply of medicine should be delivered to the school. When your child needs a medicine to be given during the school day, please act quickly to follow these policies so we may begin to give the medicine as soon as possible.

The Children's Medical Security Plan (administered by the MDPH Bureau of Family and Community Health, Division of Maternal, Child and Family Health) has expanded to provide primary care health insurance for uninsured Massachusetts's children from birth to age 19. In addition, children and their families may be eligible for full health insurance through MassHealth, administered by the Division of Medical Assistance. For further information, please call CMSP at (617) 624-6065.

School Resource Officer

As the result of a Shrewsbury Police Department Grant, Sherwood Middle School has access to a School Resource Officer as a part of the Administrative Team. In this capacity the SRO works with parents, answers their concerns on a variety of issues, and looks for alternative after school activities/programs to engage the students. This role at the school is one of mentor, confidant, and expert on the law.

School Safety

Lock down procedures have been established in consultation with the School Resource Office at the Middle and High Schools. These procedures, as well as required fire drills, will be practiced during the school year.

Homework

Homework is a major curriculum component and a vital part of the Sherwood Middle School program. It is an extension of the regular daily school program and, as such, it ought to have the same thoughtful, creative consideration and planning given to other aspects of the program.

Homework Requests Due to Absences

When students are absent from school it is their responsibility to make up assignments upon their return. It is suggested that the student contact another student in class to cover one and two day absences.

Parent calls for homework

Parent requests will be honored on the **third consecutive day** that a student is absent. A school secretary will fill out a "homework request" form upon receiving such a request and will forward this form on to the student's homeroom teacher. These assignments are to be left in the office at the close of school. Parents can pick up requested assignments in the main office between 2:30 and 3:30 p.m.

Sherwood Middle School expects all students to be in attendance every day except for illness or an emergency situation. Consistent classroom instruction is key to successful academic performance. Family vacations during the year are discouraged. If a family must take a vacation during the school year, please contact the appropriate grade level administrator in advance to discuss how missed work will be completed. A folder of missed work will be prepared during the student's absence. Missed work must be completed in a timely manner upon return to school. Due dates will be set by the teachers and communicated to the student.

Planners

On the first day of school, all students are issued a homework assignment book. Parents should check this assignment book on a daily basis. Lost books must be replaced. Books may be purchased at the Main Office.

Parent Help

Parents are encouraged to set guidelines for good study habits at home. Set aside a quiet place and when possible, a consistent time for their child to complete homework. Parents should monitor the time allotment for homework and see that there is no interruption from TV, radio, stereo or computer use that is not school related. Teaching teams will address homework policy and study habits as part of their Open House program.

Summer Reading Program

Shrewsbury Public Schools has a required summer reading program for all students grades K through 12. Each spring parents will receive a list of the required reading titles for their child. Assigned titles are available in the town library. Each fall teachers and students will review the previous summer's readings. Parents are requested to ensure that their children complete all of the assignments. Building strong reading habits will contribute to your child's future success in school.

Summer School

Students who fail Language Arts, Math, Science, or Social Studies will be required to make the subject up in summer school. Students who fail two or more of these subjects may be retained. Summer School is held during the month of July. There are two morning sessions that meet for 21 days.

Course of Studies

Curriculum Philosophy

Recognizing the developmental needs of the young adolescent, Sherwood Middle School must ensure that students are prepared to be successful, productive, and contributing members of an ever-changing global society. In this context, students will demonstrate communication skills, facility in social interaction as a team member, problem solving, decision-making and analytic capabilities, civic responsibility, personal skill in developing and maintaining wellness, and the use of technology as a tool for learning.

Teaming at Sherwood Middle School

All students are placed on two-person teams. Each team consists of a Math/Science teacher and a Language Arts/Social Studies teacher. Teams, generally speaking, have adjoining rooms. These teachers work together to deliver the core curriculum to each student. These teachers have common planning time and work closely together planning instructional units, seeking coordination wherever appropriate.

Several teams work together on pods. Pods are grouped together and share common space in the building and common planning time. This allows for teams to work together on interdisciplinary units, field trips and special events.

Allied Arts and Foreign Language

Part of quality middle level education is a full range of Allied Arts as well as foreign languages. This provides for a well-rounded educational experience. Each student will be assigned to six Allied Arts classes (listed below) that meet for thirty days. This allows for all six Allied Arts classes to meet in the 180 school days.

***Grade 5**

Art A
Art B
Computer Education
Health
Curriculum Enrichment
General Music

***Grade 6**

Health A
Health B
Computer Education
Art
Drama
General Music

**Classes will not necessarily meet in this order.*

In addition, each student will take French or Spanish for each of his or her two years at Sherwood. Students meet with their Foreign Language teacher four out of every six days. On the

other two days, each student will have Physical Education. Both Foreign Language and Physical Education meet for the entire school year.

Band/Chorus/Orchestra: Students have the opportunity to participate in a music program. Students who do not choose a music elective will participate in support or extended learning on team. Band and Orchestra meet two times a week. Chorus meets once weekly.

Writing Program: Sherwood Middle School students participate in the John Collins Writing Program, "Writing Across the Curriculum". This program offers a consistent and comprehensive approach to writing instruction across grade levels and disciplines. Key features of the program include the following points:

- ✓ Cumulative Writing Folder that each student maintains within each content area. Students write for a variety of purposes on a wide range of topics and work is collected in a classroom portfolio. Student work is referred back to throughout the year to teach new skills.
- ✓ Oral reading allows students to efficiently edit their own and others' papers. Sharing writing gives students an opportunity to give and get responses on their work.
- ✓ Focus correction is an efficient approach to writing that promotes student accountability. The teacher selects one, two or three critical problem areas and corrects only those areas. This enables students to concentrate their efforts on specific skills until those skills are mastered. The district is in the process of identifying grade appropriate FCAs. Focus Correction Areas for each paper would represent a mix of stylistic, organizational and mechanical skills and specific expectations for focus correction would be communicated at the time the writing task is assigned.
- ✓ Using past papers to teach new skills enables students to take a fresh look and apply newly acquired skills to improve the quality of the writing. This technique is a powerful teaching tool because it grounds instruction in a genuine context, which makes instruction more meaningful for each student.

John Collins Format for Writing

- Left hand side of paper: List of FCAs (Focus Correction Areas) beginning on top line
- Right hand side of paper: Student name (top line), date (second line)
- Middle of paper: Title of writing piece (5th line from the top, capitalize all important words in the title)
- All writing in blue or black ink
- One inch margins on both sides of the paper

English Language Arts Curriculum

The English Language Arts program at Sherwood Middle School is one part of a K-12 curriculum plan that is designed to teach learners how to reason and use language purposefully as they comprehend, construct and convey meaning. The goals of the program are in alignment with

those identified by Massachusetts English Language Arts Curriculum Frameworks. The goals are to:

- Demonstrate understanding of the dynamic nature and structure of the English language
- Acquire strategies to decode, comprehend and analyze a variety of written, spoken and visual materials.
- Learn to reflect and respond thoughtfully to various forms of spoken and written language
- Learn to write and speak with clarity, focus, coherence, and personal engagement
- Use print and electronic media effectively

At the middle level, the program is both challenging and enriching. Strong emphasis is placed on developing thinking and language skills; emphasizing writing as an essential way to develop, clarify and communicate ideas in various formats; teaching strategies necessary for acquiring academic knowledge and achieving common academic standards and attaining independence in learning. It is a balanced program, and instruction includes a variety of methods, texts, strategies and materials to encourage learners to excel and reach their highest potential.

The curriculum provides for explicit instruction in reading/writing strategies; speaking, listening and presenting; grammar, usage and mechanics; vocabulary study; and research and technology. It draws on literature from many genres, time periods and cultures. As a core discipline, it is tied to and integrated into all other disciplines in a variety of ways. Specific interdisciplinary units of study are incorporated into each grade level,

Student progress is measured by a wide variety of assessment techniques. These may include review of assigned class work and homework, quizzes, examinations, oral presentations and research reports. It is expected that written answers and essays demonstrate understanding of key ideas, contain appropriate support of ideas and opinions and insightful choice of vocabulary. It is further expected that written responses be well organized and contain correct spelling, grammar and punctuation.

Grade 5

In the Language Strand, students will:

- Listen for different purposes
- Express ideas, discuss
- Give oral presentations
- Dramatize
- Use conflict resolution

In the Reading and Literature Strand, students will:

- Analyze, synthesize, and evaluate print and other media
- Read and identify genre (nonfiction, mystery, adventure, photo essays, fantasy, short story, interview)
- Understand characterization, point of view, theme, imagery, tone, and irony
- Create time lines and maps
- Skim and scan information

- Uses of multiple meaning words
- Homonyms, synonyms and antonyms
- Context clues, analogies
- Grade level high frequency words
- Structural word analysis (root words, prefixes, suffixes, inflections, plurals, possessives)

In the Composition Strand, students will:

- Write for a variety of purposes
- Write using a variety of genre (narrative, expository, descriptive, persuasive)
- Write topic sentences with support for details
- Use modes of expression (point of view, figurative language, persuasive speech essay, fact to opinion)
- Language conventions (common spelling rules)

In the Media Strand, students will:

- Develop computer literacy
- Interact with programs
- Use electronic and audio visual media
- Create a data base
- Use non-fiction resources and library skills to locate information

Grade 6

In the Language Strand, students will:

- Apply identified grammar competencies in speaking and editing
- Spell grade 1-6 high frequency words correctly in all writing
- Study vocabulary and the structure and origins of words using Wordly Wise

In the Literature Strand, students will:

- Study and report on noted poets and their works and identify and apply poetic devices - rhyme, repetition, metaphor, simile, personification, alliteration, hyperbole, etc.
- Read, analyze and discuss folk tales, mythology, and related fantasy, noting distinguishing features of each
- Read a variety of fiction and non-fiction related to themes and social studies units
- Read selected novels related to author studies or classics
- Learn to identify and discuss strategies authors use
- Work on identifying organizing structure in non-fiction or content selections - compare/contrast, cause/effect and sequence

In the Composition Strand, students will:

- Write descriptions with particular emphasis on figurative language and strong adjectives and verbs.
- Write formal business letters.
- Write answers to essay questions with evidence and examples.
- Learn to summarize and restate key ideas.

- Frame questions and choose a topic within limits.
- Organize information using strategies such as outlining, webbing or mapping.
- Prepare a simple bibliography.
- Add to stock of word processing strategies with emphasis on editing and formatting.

In the Media Strand, students will:

- Communicate research findings through various genres (research paper, oral presentation, PowerPoint)

Mathematics Curriculum

The mathematics curriculum at Sherwood Middle School has been aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and the Standards of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM). The Learning Standards: Number and Operations; Patterns, Functions, and Algebra; Geometry; Measurement; and, Data Analysis, Statistics, and Probability, are evident throughout the curriculum. Through the use of open response questions the students are building on their ability to explain their mathematical thinking process in preparation for the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment Systems (MCAS) testing.

Problem solving, communication, connections and reasoning are an integral part of each topic of instruction. The students actively participate in a variety of learning formats: large group instruction, collaborative small groups, and individual investigations. To assist in their learning, students use measurement tools, manipulatives, calculators, and computers. Formal and informal assessment practices include open response questions, tests, quizzes, projects, and individual assignments. Estimation is used throughout the curriculum to check the reasonableness of answers. Through the use of the John Collins Writing Program, students are taught to read, write, and speak in mathematical terms. Open response questions are integrated into the different areas of study in each grade. Skills are not taught in isolation but are stressed in all mathematical topics at all levels. Technology is incorporated into lessons in both grades.

Grade 5

In the Number Relations Strand, students will:

- Practice multiplication and division facts
- Determine the most efficient solution strategy (mental computation, paper and pencil, estimation, calculator) for solving problems
- Expand understanding of the base ten number system to include infinitely large and infinitely small quantities
- Represent 1 million with concrete examples
- Describe the relationship of 1 million to other numbers in the number system (220,000 is about $\frac{1}{4}$ of a million)
- Use patterns to extend a list of equivalent fractions
- Solve multiplication and division equations to find fractional parts of sets ($\frac{1}{6} \times 18 = 3$)
- Compare and order fractions on a number line
- Analyze and create other number systems (other than base ten)

In the Data Analysis Strand, students will:

- Organize and report data in a way that best conveys gathered information
- Analyze data displays (graphs) and write report about findings

In the Patterns and Functions Strand, students will:

- Identify the patterns found in a sequence of growing shapes
- Use the predictability of patterns to identify any element in a sequence
- Explore the discovery of Karl Gauss and apply to other problem situations (find the sum of all numbers 1-100)

In the Logic and Algebra Strand, students will:

- Create an attribute set, showing all possible, unique combinations
- Predict the number of possible combinations for given situations
- Use the language of logic to create and solve problems

In the Measurement Strand, students will:

- Explore rectangular solids to determine a method or formula to find the volume
- Find an unknown dimension of a rectangular solid when two of the dimensions are known
- Express equivalent liquid measures in different ways (32 oz = 1 qt = 2 pts = 1/2 gal)
- Calculate the cost per ounce of various quantities

Grade 6**In the Number and Operations Strand, students will:**

- Describe relationships among fractions, decimals, and percents
- Estimate results of computations with whole numbers, fractions, decimals, and percents
- Solve problems involving the four operations with whole numbers, fractions, decimals, and percents
- Compare and order whole numbers, decimals, fractions, and integers
- Explore the properties of numbers, including the Commutative Property, the Associative Property, the Distributive Property, and the Order of Operations
- Begin to work with exponents, perfect squares and square roots, and positive and negative integers
- Apply ratio and proportion to the solution of problems
- Apply number theory concepts, including prime and composite numbers, prime factorization, greatest common factor, least common multiple, and divisibility to the solution of problems

In the Patterns, Functions, and Algebra Strand, students will:

- Examine numeric and geometric patterns and write a rule to describe the pattern
- Describe strategies for solving linear equations using concrete models, tables, and graphs
- Produce and interpret representations of real situations and mathematical relationships with concrete models, tables, graphs, and rules in words and symbols
- Use a variety of problem solving strategies to reach reasonable solutions to multi-step problems

In the Geometry Strand, students will:

- Describe the relationship among points, lines, and planes
- Use manipulatives and technology to model geometric shapes
- Describe and apply techniques for determining if two shapes are congruent

In the Measurement Strand, students will:

- Model situations and solve problems involving proportional relationships and units of measure
- Explore and measure the area and perimeter of two-dimensional objects, and the surface area and volume of rectangular solids

- Compare and contrast the concepts of area and perimeter
- Identify, measure, describe, classify, and construct various angles and triangles
- Find the sums of angle measures of polygons
- Describe the relationships of the radius, diameter, circumference, and area of a circle

In the Data Analysis, Statistics, and Probability Strand, students will:

- Describe data sets using the concepts of median, mode, mean, maximum and minimum, and range
- Construct and interpret stem-and-leaf plots and line plots
- Use tree diagrams and other models to represent outcomes of experiments and analyze the outcomes
- Find the probabilities of events with equally likely outcomes
- Use probability to predict possible outcomes

Science Curriculum

The science program has as its goal the achievement of scientific literacy for all students. The program strives to provide all students with the scientific experiences that are appropriate to their cognitive stages of development, that build confidence, and serve as a foundation for more advanced ideas that prepare them for live in an increasingly complex scientific world.

The science courses have been aligned to follow the Massachusetts Science and Technology Curriculum Frameworks, which require science concepts in the three major areas: earth and space science, life science and physical science. Teachers and curriculum specialists continue to work together to improve the integration of science and technology. Problem solving skills and all of the scientific process skills are stressed in order that our young scientists may be able to successfully analyze and complete difficult tasks that they encounter in life.

Various forms of assessment used to evaluate the progress of students may include: reports, tests, lab reports, design projects and other specified assignments.

The Science Program Promotes:

- Students' curiosity and use of existing knowledge by modeling questioning and making connections between new science material and ideas from earlier studies.
- The inquiry approach for laboratory investigations. Often, investigations are open ended, allowing students to move in directions that develop as students generate questions and find ways to answer these questions.
- The development of habits of mind that emphasize a respect for evidence, persistence, open-mindedness and awareness of the effects of our actions on the surroundings in which we live.
- Integration of science, technology, mathematics and human affairs in a design and redesign process that yields potential solutions to complex problems faced in today's world.
- The applications of life science, physical science, earth science and technology to our student's lives.